

A ^{4th}-
S E R M O N

PREACHED AT
HAMPTON-COURT

On the 29th of *May* 1662.

BEING
The Anniversary of His Sacred
Majesty's most happy Return.

BY
RICHARD ALLESTRY, D. D. and Chap-
lain to His MAJESTY.


L O N D O N,
Printed by *J. Fleisher* for *John Martin*, *James Allestry*,
and *Thomas Dicus*, at the Bell in *S. Pauls*
Church-yard. M DC LXII.

1/6

T O
The Right Honourable
EDWARD

Earl of *Clarendon*, Lord high
Chancellor of *England*, and
Chancellor of the University
of *Oxford*.

My Lord,

 O vouch your Lord-
ships commands for
the publishing this
Discourse, I might
reasonably think, would be to
libel your judgement ; and the pre-
fixing your *Name* to it, and this
mean address, would look ra-
ther like *revenge* then *homage* or

The Epistle Dedicatory.

obedience: if I did not know that *low* performances are due to the transcendency of such a *subject* as I then discours'd upon, and such a *Patron* as I now dedicate to: So I lie *prostrate* under my *great Arguments*, here *insufficiency* is *Art* and *Rhetorick*. And the truth is, my Lord, it was not this which made me so solicitous to avoid your injunctions, but apprehensions of the unusefulness of the Discourse it self.

When God's most signal methods of all sorts do not seem to have wrought much conviction; when neither our own dismal guilts, nor miseries, nor
most

The Epistle Dedicatory.

most expresse miracles of deliverance have made us sensible, but after the equally stupendous 30th of *January* and 29th of *May*, and the black time that interven'd, we are still the same *perverse untractable* people ; when *luxury* is the retribution made for *plenty*, *licence* for *liberty*, and *Atheism* for *Religion*, whilst *miracles of mercy* are acknowledg'd only by *prodigies of ingrateful disobedience* : and on the other side, when *factious* humors swell against all *Laws*, as they would either *overflow* those mounds, or make them *yield* and *give way* to them ; when *Declarations* and *Decrees*, which were *infallible* when they

The Epistle Dedicatory.

they came only from a *party* of a *part* of a *Parliament*, are neither of *force* nor *esteem* when they have all solemnity and obligation that *just* and *full authority* can give; alas, what hopes of doing any thing can a weak Harangue entertain? But, my Lord, since you are pleas'd to command, I give up both *it* and my *understanding* to your Lordship, and the weaker the Discourse is, so much the more pregnant testimony is it of the *obsequiousness* of

My Lord,

Your Lordships most devoted

and most humble servant

RICHARD ALLESTRY.

HOSEA 3. 5.

*Afterward shall the children of Israel return,
and seek the Lord their God, and David
their King, and shall fear the Lord and his
goodness.*

HE had said in the words
before, that the children of
Israel shall abide many daies
without a King and without
a Prince, without a sacrifice
and without an image or al-
tar, and without an Ephod and without Tera-
phim. Now when they shall have been
for many years in such a state of helpless
desolation, shall have no King under whose
shadow they, their laws and rights might
hope for shelter; no Prince to guard them
from the sad calamities of wild confusion
or usurping violence; shall have no exer-
cises of religion to allay and soften those ca-
lamities, and give them comfort in the
bearing of them; no Altar to lay hold on
for security against them, or to stretch out
B their

their hands towards, for deprecation of them; *no* nor a *God* to put an end to this sad state; nor any *means of direction* what to doe under it, *no Ephod* to ask counsel at; nor yet the *pageantry*, the *fallacy* of these, *no Teraphim* for *Ephods*, nor *Image* for a *God*; the same destruction having seized *these* and their *worshippers*, the *people* and their *Idols* going into Captivity together, and the *only true God* having forsaken them: Now when the *Prophet* had denounc'd this state of Woe, which was to dwell with them so long as that their very expectations of deliverance should be dying, having continued *threescore* years and *ten*, a longer and more wearisome age of *patience* then *life*, he then proceeds to sweeten all by telling them of a *return*, and what things they shall doe in it; and they are three.

First, *Seek the Lord their God*, apply themselves to his Worship and Obedience, and cleave to him; for so the word is rendred *ⲁⲉⲟⲩⲙⲁⲁⲩ* Lev. 19. 31. and *Jeremy* repeating this c. 30. 9. words it, *shall serve the Lord their God, and David their King*:

Which

Which is the *second* thing they were to doe. As the *Ecclesiastical* state was to be settled, so the *secular* too upon its just foundations: *Religion* and *Loaylty* both running in their ancient current.

Thirdly, *They shall fear the Lord and his goodness*: not onely tremble before him, who is the *Lord*, that did exert his power in their destruction; but shall much more revere his *goodness*, that did flow out in such plentiful miraculous expresses of deliverance.

Now these being not onely *prophecy* what in that juncture they would doe, nor onely *duties* what they were to doe, but also *counsels* and *directions* immediately from *God* what they were best to doe, the onely prudent and safe course according to the policies of heaven; the direct view of these particulars in reference to that state of theirs is not an unconcerning prospect at this season, which is the *Anniversary* of an equal return; and therefore I shall lay them so before you, and the reflexion on them in our practice shall make the application.

1. *They shall seek the Lord their God is my first part, and the Lord's prime direction for the repairing of a broken Nation. Neither indeed can any other course be taken; for till we have found him, while he does hide his face, nothing but darkness dwells upon the land; or if any light do break out, 'tis but the kindlings of his anger: so he expresses, Deut. 31. 17. This people will forsake me and break my Covenant; then my anger shall be kindled against them, and I will forsake them, and hide my face from them, and they shall be devoured, and many evils and troubles shall befall them, so that they will say in that day, Are not these evils come upon us because our God is not amongst us? This absence is onely another word for desolation: Be thou instructed, ô Jerusalem, saith God by Jeremy, c. 6. 8. lest my soul depart from thee, and I make thee desolate, a land not inhabited: As if without him there were nothing else but solitude in Cities and in Courts, and all were desert where he does not dwell. Yea there is something beyond desolation, Hos. 9. 11, 12. As for Ephraim, their glory shall flee away like a bird from the birth and from the womb,*

womb, and from the conception: though they bring up their children, yet will I bereave them that there shall not be a man, *אִישׁ יִהְיֶה וְלֹא יִהְיֶה* yea wo also to them when I depart from them. And it must needs be so; for let our state be never so calamitous, if God be not departed, there is comfort in it, and a deliverer at hand: If we are in the place of dragons, his presence will make heaven there; and although we be covered with the shadow of death, if the light of his Countenance break in, we are in glory; and the brightness of that will soon damp and shine out the fiery trial. But if the Lord depart, then there is no redemption possible: God hath forsaken him, persecute him and take him, for there is none to deliver him, *Psa. 71. 11.* But if there were deliverance some other way, yet the want of God's presence is an evil, such as nothing in the whole world can make good: the presence of an angel in his stead does not. When the Lord said to Israel, I will not go up in the midst of thee, but I will send an Angel with thee, and drive out the Amorite, the Hittite, &c. yet when the people heard these evil tidings, they mourned, and no man did put on his Ornaments,

Psal. 44. 19.

Exod. 33. 4. Nay more, I shall not speak a contradiction if I shall say, that the most intimate presence of the Godhead does not supply God's absence; and such a small withdrawing of himself as may consist with being united hypostatically, was too much for him to bear who was Immanuel, when he complained *God was not with him*: I mean our Saviour on the Cross. He, who although he did beseech against his cup with fervencies that did breath out in heats of bloody sweat, with agonies of prayer; yet when he fell down under it, did chearfully submit to it, saying, *Not my will, but thy will be done*; yet when God hides himself, he does expostulate with him, crying out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* His God could no more forsake him, then himself could be not himself: and yet the apprehension of that which could not be was even insufferable to him, to whom nothing could be insufferable. He seems to feel a very contradiction while he but seems to feel the want of the Lord's presence.

Such is the sad importance of God's not being with us; and this same instance tells

us

Luk. 22. 44.

Ver. 42.

Mat. 27. 46.

us what drives him away. 'Twas *sin* that he withdrew from then: *Christ* did but take on him our guilt, and upon that the *Lord* forsook him: God could no more endure to behold wickedness in him, then the Sun could to see God suffer; Iniquity eclips'd them both, and sin did separate betwixt him and himself, and made that person who was God cry out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* And it will doe the same betwixt God and a people. Isa. 59. 1, 2. Behold, the *Lord's* hand is not shortned that it cannot save, nor his ear heavy that it cannot hear; but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. His face is clothed with light, we know; but when Wickedness over-spreads a people, those deeds of darkness put out the light of his countenance. His hand although it be not shortned, yet it contracts and shuts it self, not onely to grasp and withhold his mercies from them, but to smite: Iniquity builds such a wall of separation as does shut out omnipresence, and makes him who is every where, not be with such a people;

not

Mat. 27. 45.

not be in hearing of their needs; for when their sins do cry, no prayers can be hearkened to; *he will not hear you*, saith the Prophet. And that gives us the very *reasons* of the Lord's departure from a people, and the manner of it.

He is taking away his peace and mercies from a Nation when he will *hear no prayers* for it; and He declares that he will hear no prayers when he withdraws once from his *house of prayer*, and makes his offices to cease. The place appointed for these offices, the *Sanctuary*, he calls, we know, the *tabernacle of meeting*, that is, where he would *meet* his votaries, and hear and bless them; calls it his *house*, his *dwelling-place*, his *court*, his *presence*, and his *throne*: and if so, when he is not to be found in these, when he no longer dwells nor meets in them, we may be sure that he hath left the land. The Psalmist, when he does complain men had *done evil in the Sanctuary*, the *adversaries roared in the midst of the Congregations*, and *set up their banners there for trophies*; they broke down all the carved work thereof with axes and hammers, and had

אֵלֶּיךָ מִן־הַמִּקְדָּשׁ

^a Exod. 29.

42, 43.

^f Psal. 42. 4.

^d Psal. 74. 7.

^e Psal. 31. 20.

^f Jer. 17. 12.

& 14. 21.

Psal. 74.

Ver. 3.

4.

6.

had defiled the dwelling places of God's name even to the ground, and burnt up all the houses of God in the land; he does suppose that God was then departed when they had left him no abiding place: and therefore he cries out, O God, wherefore art thou absent from us so long? Remember Sion where thou hast dwelt. But 'tis not only upon these Analogies I build this method of departure; we shall finde exactly in Ezekiel's Vision of that case to which my Text referres: it begins chap. 9. 3. *And the glory of the God of Israel (i.e. the shining cloud, the token of his presence in the Sanctuary,) went up from the Cherub whereupon he was, to the threshold of the House, as going out; and then ver. 8. he does refuse to be entreated for the land: after that ch. 10. 18. The glory went from off the threshold to the midst of the City; and chap. 11. 23. it went from thence to the mountain without the City, and so away: And then nothing but desolation dwelt upon the land, until the counsel of my Text was followed, and they did seek the Lord their God: for then the glory did return into the Sanctuary just as it went away, as you may find it ch. 43.*

Ver. 7.

Ver. 1.

2.

C

And

And having seen *when and how* God forsakes a people, and *for what*, that does direct us *how to seek him*, and it is thus; When men forsake those paths in which they did not onely erre and goe astray, but did walk contrary to God, so that they did forsake each other; and do return, walk in his waies, the waies of his Commandments, and return also to his Church, and seek him in his house, fall low before his footstool, begge of him to meet in his tabernacle, renew his Worship, and all invitations of him to return into his dwelling-place. For sure as it is in vain to seek him but in his own waies, nor can we hope to meet him but in his Tabernacle of meeting; so also Scripture calls both these to seek the Lord, and promises to both the finding him. To the first, Deut. 4. 29, 30. *If from thy tribulation thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, if thou turn to the Lord thy God, and shalt be obedient unto his voice. And to the second, Jer. 29. 12. speaking of this sad state to which my Text relates, Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me; and*

I will hearken unto you, and I will be found of you, saith the Lord, and I will turn away your captivity. I could prodnce you instances of Asa making all his people swear to seek the Lord: but because my Text speaks of David, he shall be the great explication, as he was the practice of this duty in both senses. In the former, 119. Psal. I have sought thy Commandments above gold or precious stone; more then that which does make and does adorn my Crown, then that which furnishes all the necessities and all the pomps of Royalty. And for the other, Psal. 63. 1, 2. O God, thou art my God, early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land where no water is: To see thy power and thy glory, as I have seen thee in the Sanctuary. His very words do seem to labour too, and he does seek expressions to tell us how he seeks. The hot fits of a thirsty palate that call so oft and so impetuously are in his soul; it hath a pious fever, which cannot be allay'd but by pouring out of his soul to God in the Temple, by breathing out its heats in his devotion offices. Nay more, he longs, hath that I know not whether ap-

petite, or *passion*, which is not to be understood, but onely *suffered*; to which all the *unreasonable violences* which *passion* can be heated into, all the *defaillances* nature can be opprest into, are *natural*; it is the *bodies Extasie*. Now this he had towards the *worship* of the *Sanctuary*; his very *flesh* found rapture in those exercises, and when he was in a *barren and dry land*, was driven from the *plenties* of a *Court*, and from the *glories* of a *throne* into a *desert solitude*, he found no other wants but of *God's house*; did *mind*, *pant*, and *long* after nothing else, did neither thirst for his *necessities*, nor long for his *own Crown*, but for the *Tabernacle* only. And besides the *Religion* of this, he had *reason of State* too to be thus affected; this was the best means to engage his *Subjects* to him and secure his *Throne*. He knew, if by *establishing God's worship* and by *going with the multitude*, as he did use, to the exercises of it; if by *royal example* and *encouragements* of vertue, and by *discountenancing* and *chastising* impiety, by doing as he did profess to doe *Ps. 101.* (that *directory* for a *Court*) he could people his *land* with *holy living*, and his

his Temple with *holy-Worship*; he knew he should then have good Subjects, *loyal* to him and at *peace* with themselves. If they will seek their God, then they will seek their King. The Lord saw this dependence, and therefore counselled this course should be taken. The Master of our Politicks discerned it too, and therefore does advise that the first and chiefest publick cares should be about things of Religion, that and the same profession of it being *πνευματικὴν ἀπάσῃ κοινωίας ἔνομοθεσίας ἐρείσματα*, the cement of Communities, and the very foundation of all legislative, and indeed all power in the Magistrate: and in the people *φίλτρον ἀντισμικτωτικὸν ἔστι* *σμός αὐτοῦ θείας*, 'tis a most efficacious philtre, a charm, a Gordian knot of kindness. And as a Jew observed of their own Nation, *ὅς γὰρ μίαν μὲν ἔχειν ἔστι καὶ αὐτὴν δόξαν περὶ θεοῦ, καὶ πῶς ἕσται μετὰ ἄλλων ἀφ' αὐτῶν, καὶ ἵσται ἐν ἡμεῖς ἀνθρώπων συμφωνίαν ὅτι περὶ*, To have one and the same opinions of God, and not to differ in their rites from one another, breeds the best harmony in mens affections. When on the other side no obligations, though the most signal and divine, will hold them in obedi-

Arist. Poll. 7.

Joseph. l.
con. Appio.

ence and peace, if their *ambitions* or *interests* look another way: and if at any time *present advantage*, or an *expectation*, or some *passion* do encline them to seek David their King; yet the appearance of a *change of Interest*, that *expectation* defeated, or a *cross animosity* will burst those bonds, unless *Religion* and *Communion in Worship* help to twist them. David had had experience of this.

Abner knew of God's oath to David that after Saul he should be King over all Israel; but he was otherwise concerned, and therefore he made Ishbosheth King, maintained a long and a sore warre even against what he knew God was engaged to bring about, and made himself strong for the house of Saul, 2 Sam. 2, 3. ch. But when a quarrel happened betwixt Ishbosheth and him, then, So doe God to Abner and more also, except as the Lord hath sworn to David, even so I doe to him, to set up the throne of David over Israel and over Judah. And he sent Messengers to him saying, Whose is the land? make but thy league with me. c. 3. 9, 10, 11, 12. Do but look forward, and you find when Abner was cut off, and
Ishbo-

Ishbosheth was slain, and *Israel* had no leader, then they came to *David*, saying, *Behold, we are thy bone and thy flesh, and the Lord said to thee, Thou shalt feed my people Israel, c. 5. 1, 2.* They knew all that before, yet would not let him doe it, till they had no other leader. Nay, when they had done that, by *Absalom's* insinuations (who in a way of treacherous pity did instill dislikes against the government, and did remonstrate in good wishes, as some men do in prayers, c. 15. 3, 4.) they were all drawn into rebellion against this *David*, and made him flie out of the land, and became Subjects to that *Absalom*. When he was dead indeed they speak of bringing back the King, c. 19. 10. and when his own *Judah* had done it, quarrell'd ver. 43. because that their advice was not first had: and though *Judah* had nothing but their service, for, *Have we eaten at all of the Kings cost, or hath he given us any gift?* say they, ver. 42. yet *Israel* is angry, because he came not back upon their score, for they forsooth have ten parts in him, v. 43. and yet the next day every man of *Israel* went after him that said, *We have no part*

1 Kings 12.
16.

in David, Sheba a man of Belial, ch. 20. 1. Thus no allegiance, no tie however sacred and divine will hold them who follow not upon God's score. Nay at the last, because that Rehoboam would not ease their taxes, all Israel cry out, *What portion have we in David? see to thine own house, David.* And to make this secession perpetual (which all the former did not prove) Jeroboam did use no other policy, but to *change the Worship and the Priests*: He knew he should divide their hearts and Nations for ever, when he had altered once the Service and the Officers; and if he could but keep them from *seeking God at Jerusalem*, he was secure they would *not seek David their King*. And so it proved. Now the Lord to prevent divisions had provided so farre *Uniformity* in his worship, that he required a single *U-nity*; and that it might be but in *one manner*, he let it be but in *one place*.

And truly, when men once depart from Uniformity, what measures can they set themselves of changing? what shall confine or put shores to them? what principle can they proceed upon which shall
engage

engage them to stay any where? and why may not divisions be as infinite as mens phantasies? And though, when those are but in circumstantial things, those who are strong, and know them to be such, are no otherwise concerned to contend for them then on *Authorities* behalf, (to which every change is a *Convulsion* fitt,) and on the account of decency, and of compliance with the universal Church: yet when others do *dogmatize*, and put *conscience* in the *not doing* them, and stand at such a distance from them as to chuse *Schisme*, *Disobedience*, and *Sedition* rather, and therefore must needs look upon *damnation* in them; these differences make as great a *gulf* and *chafme* as that which does divide *Dives* from *Abraham's* bosome. It is one God, one Faith, one Worship makes hearts one. Hands lifted up together in the Temple they will joyn and clasp: and so Religion does fulfill its name *a religando*, binds Prince and Subjects all together; and they who thus do seek the Lord their God, will also seek David their King, God's next direction, and my second part.

Luk. 16. 26.

2. And here three things offer themselves, *a King, their King, and David their King.*

I am not here to read a Lecture of State policy upon a vie of Governments; why seek *a King*, not any other sort of Government; and why *their King*, one that already was so by the right of *Succeſſion*, not whom *addresses* or *election* ſhould make so. And though I think 'twere easie to demonstrate onely Monarchy had ever a *divine* or *natural* original, and that *elective Monarchy* is most *unsafe* and *burthensome*, full of dangerous and uneasie consequences, and this so much to fight, that choice for the most part bounds it self, proves but a *ceremony* of *Succeſſion*: yet this I need not doe, for I am dealing with the Jews, who had God's judgement in the case, and his appointment too; and to me that is argument enough. And when God hath declar'd, *for the transgressions of a land many are the Princes thereof*; many at once, as in a *Commonwealth*, or many *several families* successively, for so God reckons also one or many; 'tis still, we see, *David their King*, while 'tis in *David's*.

David's line, and so the King does truly never die, while his race lives. If either of these many be God's punishment, for the sins of a land, I will not say that they who love the many Princes love the transgressions which God plagues so; but I will say, they who do chuse that which God calls his plague, that quarrel for his vengeance, and with great strife and hazard take his indignation by force, I can but pity them in their own options and enjoyments: but, O my soul, enter not thou into their counsels.

As for seeking their King, I shall content my self with that which Calvin saies upon the words; *Nam aliter verè & ex animo Deum querere non potuit, quin se etiam subjeceret legitimo imperio cui subiectus erat*: For they could not otherwise truly and with all their heart seek God, except they did subject themselves to his Government to whom they did of right belong as Subjects. And I shall adde that they who do forsake their King, will soon forsake their God. The ^a Rabbines say it more severely

^a R. Simeon
the son of

Jochai said, *במלכות ישראל בימי רחבעם במלכות* and R. Simeon the son of Menasiah said, *שמים ובמלכות בית דוד ובבית המקדש* *מין מראין סמן נאילה לישראל עד שיחורו* *בבקשו שלשון*

of Israel, that they at once rejected three things, the Kingdome of the house of David, and the Kingdome of Heaven, and the Sanctuary. And truly, if we do consult that State from the beginning, we shall find that when they were without their King, they alwaies were without their God.

Deut. 33. 5.

Exo. 32. 1, 5.

Moses was the first King in Ieshurun, and he was onely gone into the Mount for forty daies, and they set up a golden Calf; they make themselves a God if they want him whom the Lord makes so, as he does the Magistrate: if they have not a Prince, that *εἰκὼν εἰμύλης θεοῦ*, living Image of God, then they must have an Idol. When Moses his next successor was dead, we read that the man Micah had an house of Gods, and consecrated one of his sons to be his Priest: and truly he might make his Priest who made his Deities. And the account of this is given, In those daies there was no King in Israel, Jud. 17. 5, 6. The very same is said ch. 18. 1. to preface the Idolatry of the Tribe of Dan. There was no heir of restraint, as it is worded ver. 7. It seems, to curb impiety is the Princes Inheritance, which till it be suppressed,

prest, he hath not what he is heir to. But Vice will know no boundaries if there be no King, whose sword is the onely mound and fence against it: for if we reade on there, 19, 20, 21 ch. we shall find those dismal tragedies of *Lust* and *Warre*, the one of which did sin to death the Levites wife; the other, besides 40000. slain of them who had a righteous cause, and whom God did bid fight, destroyed also a Tribe in *Israel*: these all sprang from the same occasion, for so the story closes it, *In those daies there was no King in Israel*, ch. 21. 25.

Just upon this, when God in their necessities did raise them *Judges*, that is, *Kings*, read all their story, you will find to almost every several Judge there did succeed a several Idolatry: God still complaining, *the children of Israel did evil again after the death of such an one*, till he raised them another. Those 450. years being divided all betwixt their *Princes* and their *Idols*. After them *Jeroboam*, he that made the great secession of that people from their Prince, hath got no other character from God but this, the * *Man that did make Israel*

Judg. 3.7.

& ver. 12.

Ch. 4.1.

Ch. 6.1.

Ch. 10.6.

Ch. 13.1.

* 1 Kings 16.

26. Ch. 21.

22. & 22.

52, &c.

to sin, at once against God and against their King. Yea upon this account they are reckon'd by God to sin after both their *Idolatry* and *State* were ended, when their *calves* and their *Kingdome* were destroyed. *Ezek. 4. 4, 5.* the Lord does bid the Prophet lie on his left side 390. daies, to bear the iniquity of Israel according to the number of the years of their iniquity. But this was more then the years of their *State*, which were onely 255. 390 years indeed there were betwixt the falling off of the ten Tribes, and the destruction of *Jerusalem* by the King of *Babel*; but those ten Tribes were gone, their *Kingdome* perfectly destroy'd above 130. years before: but their iniquity was not, it seems, that does outlive their *State*, so long as that *God's Temple*, that *King's house* did stand from which they did divide. As if *Seditious* and *Schismaticks* sin longer then they are, even while they are whom they do sin against in separating from.

'Tis true, there was an *Abaz* and *Manasseh* in the house of *David*, but *Hezekiah* and *Josiah* did succeed. Mischief did not appear entail'd on *Monarchy*, as 'tis upon rebellion and having

having no King. It does appear their Kings were guards also to God and his Religion, the great defenders of his Faith and Worship. God and the Prince for the most part stood and fell together: Therefore S. Paul did afterwards advise to pray for Kings, that we might live in godliness and honesty; and still they were the same who sought the Lord their God, and David the King.

1 Tim. 2. 2.

But why David their King? for could his Kingdome disappear and be to seek, of whom the Lord had said, I have sworn once by my Holiness, I will not fail David? Psal. 89. And his Throne therefore was as sure as God is holy. But yet the Lord had said to the people of Israel, If ye doe wickedly, ye shall be destroyed both you and your King. There are other sins besides Rebellion and Treason that murder Kings and Governments. Those that support their Ills by their dependencies, and use great shadows for a shelter to rapacity, oppression, or licences, or any crying wickedness; these prove Traitors to Majesty and themselves, strike at the root of that under which they took covert, fell that and crush themselves. National vices have all

Ver. 35.

1 Sam. 12.
25.

all Treason in them, and every combination in such sins is a Conspiracy. If universal practice palliate them, we do not see their stain, it may be, think them slight; but their complexion is purple: Common blood is not deep enough to colour them, they die themselves in that that's sacred. Nay these do seem to spread contagion to God, as if they would not let the Lord be holy, nor suffer that to be which he swore by his holiness should be: for the Psalmist cries out, *Where are thy old loving kindneses which thou swarest unto David?* But sure some of God's oaths will stand; if not those of his kindness, those will by which he swears the ruine of such sinners, and God that is holy will be sanctified in judgement upon them. Yea, upon more then the offenders, for the guilty themselves are not a sacrifice equal to such piacular offences. Innocent Majesty must bleed for them too; *If you doe wickedly, you shall be destroy'd both you and your King.* Thus when God would remove Judah out of his sight, good Josiah must fall; and the same makes them be to seek David their King.

But how David their King, when 'twas

Zoro-

Psal. 89. 49.

Isa. 5. 16.

Zorobabel? for with *Theophylact* and others I conclude he must be meant in the first literal importance of the words.

It was the custome of most Nations from some great eminent Prince to name all the Succession, so at once to suggest his Excellencies to his followers, and to make his glory live. Now without doubt *David* was *Heroe* enough for this, and his valour alone sufficient to ground the like practice upon. And though we do not find that done, yet we do find his piety and his uprightness made the standard by which that of his Successors is meted. Of one 'tis said *he walked in the waies of David his father*; of another, *he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, but not like unto David his father*. And because *David* went aside, and was upright with an Exception, once therefore it is said, *The Lord was with Jehoshaphat, because he walkt in the first waies of his father David*. But besides this, his very name is given to two, *Zorobabel*, and the *Messiah*; both which were to be the restorers of their people: the one from Sin and Hell, to re-establish the *Kingdome of heaven* it self; the

2Chro. 34. 2.

2 King. 14. 3.

2Chro. 17. 3.

other to deliver his people from *Babel*, and to repair a *broken Nation* and *demolish'd Temple*. And for this work God bids them *seek David their King*.

Psal. 122.
35.

The waies from *Babel* to *Jerusalem*, from the *Confusion* of a people to a *City that is at unity in it self*, the *City of God* where he appears in perfect beauty, and where the throne of the house of *David* is, must be the *first waies of David*: in those he walk'd to *Sion*, and did invest his people in *God's promises*, the whole land of *Canaan*. In those *Zorobabel* brought them back to that land and *Sion*. And in these our *Messiah* leads us to *Mount Sion* that is above, to the *celestial Jerusalem*; does build an *universal Church* and *heaven it self*. And all that have the like to doe must walk in those *first waies*, fulfill that part of *David*, and must copy *Christ*. Such the repairers of great breaches must be: these are the waies to settle *Thrones*, the onely waies in which we may find the *goodness of the Lord*; which to *fear* is the third direction, and my last part.

They shall fear the Lord and his goodness.

3. That *Israel* who came but now out
of

of the furnace should fear the Lord whose wrath did kindle it, whose justice they had found such a consuming fire as to make the Temple it self a Sacrifice, and the whole Nation a burnt-offering, is reasonable to expect: but when his goodness had repair'd all this, to require them to fear that, does seem hard. That that goodness, which when it is once apprehended does commit a rape upon our faculties, and being tasted melts the heart, and causes dissolution of soul through swoons of complacency, that this should be received with dread and trembling, is most strange. Indeed the Psalmist saies, *There is mercy with God* that he may be feared; for were there not, we should grow desperate: but how to fear those mercies is not easie. 'Tis true, when God made his goodness pass before Moses, shewed him the glory of it, as he saies, in those most comfortable attributes, the sight of which is *beatifick Vision*, *Exod. 34. 6, &c.* The Lord, the Lord God merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin; if that

Psal. 130. 4.

which follows there be part of it, *forgiving sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty, twisting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation; if this be one ray of the glory of goodness, if it dart out such beams, alas, 'tis as devouring as the lake of fire, his very goodness stabs whole successions at once, and the guilty may tremble at it for themselves and their posterity. But if those words doe mean as we translate those very words, Jer. 46. 28. I will not leave thee altogether unpunish'd, yet will not utterly cut off, not make a full end of the guilty, when I visit iniquities upon the children, but will leave them a remnant still; then there is nothing dreadful in it, but those very visitations have kindness in them, and his rod comforts, and this issue of his goodness also is not terrible but lovely. To fear God's goodness therefore is to revere it, to entertain it with a pious astonishment, acknowledging themselves unworthy of the crums of it, especially not daring to provoke it by surfeiting, or by presuming on it, or by abusing it to serve ill ends, or any other*

נקמה ל
אנקר

other then God sent it for, those of piety and obedience: not to comply with which, is to defeat God's kindness, and the designs of it. If when they sought the Lord, he was found of them, and came to his dwelling-place onely to be forc'd thence again by their abominations; if when his goodness had restor'd all to them, they had David their King but to conspire against, an Altar onely to pollute, and a Temple to separate from, as Manasses the Priest, Sanballat's son in law, with his accomplices did doe; this were both to affront and to renounce that goodness, which above all things they must dread the doing: for if this be offended too, ruine is irreversibler; there is no other attribute in God a sinner can fly to with any hope. His Holiness cannot behold iniquity, his Justice speaks nothing but condemnation to guilt, his Power without kindness is but omnipotent destruction; but if we have his Goodness on our side, we have an Advocate in his own bosome that will bear up against the rest, for his mercy is over all his attributes as well as works: but if this also be exasperated,

and kindness grow severe, there is no refuge in the Lord, no shadow of him to take Sanctuary under; for there is nothing to allay the *anger* of his *Compassion* and *Bounty*. This sure is the extremest terror we are to dread, his kindness *more* then his severity and wrath; we have an antidote, a buckler against these, but none against the other if it be provok'd; and if the *heats of love* take fire and rise into indignation, 'tis *unquenchable flame* and *everlasting burning*. Therefore when God hath done all things that he can doe or they can wish, then most of all they must fear the Lord and his goodness.

My Text and I have spoke all this while to the *Jews*: nor do I know whether I need to address any other way, all this did so directly point at us. The glories of *this day* need not the foil of those calamities from which this day redeem'd, to set them off: Or you may read them in my *Prophet* here, and our own guilts will make too sad a Comment on his Text, who were more barbarous *Affyrians* to our selves. We also were *without a Prince* and
without

without Sacrifices, had neither King, nor Church, nor Offices, because we our selves had destroy'd them, and that we might not have them had engag'd or covenanted against them; ty'd to our miseries so, that without perjury we could neither be without them, nor yet have them. As we had broke through all our sacred oaths to invade and usurp calamity and guilt, so neither could we repent without breach of Vows. If this were not enough to make us be without a God too, then to drive him away we had defil'd his dwelling places to the ground, and by his ancient gifts of remove he was certainly gone. There was indeed exceeding much Religion among us, yet, God knows, almost none at all, while Christianity was crumbled into so many, so minute professions, that 'twas divided into little nothings, and even lost in a crowd of it self; while each man was a Church, every single professor was a whole multitude of Sects. And in this tumult, this riot of faiths, if the son of Man should have come, could he have found any faith in the land? Vertue was out of countenance and practice,

Etice, while prosperous and happy Villany usurp'd its name, while Loyalty, and conscience of oaths, and duty were most unpardonable crimes, to which nothing but ruine was an equal punishment; and all those guilts that make the *last times perillous*, *Blasphemy*, *disobedience*, *truce-breakings* and *Treasons*, *Schisms* and *Rebellions*, with all their dismal consequences and appendages, (for these are not *single, personal crimes*, these have a *politick capacity*) all these did not onely walk in the dress of piety, and under holy Masks, but were themselves the very *form of Godlineß*, by which 'twas *constituted* and *distinguished*, the *Signature* of a party of *Saints*, the *Constellation* of their *graces*: And on the other side, the detestation of such hypocrisie made others *Libertines* and *Atheists*; while seeing men such holy counterfeits, so violent in acting, and equally engag'd for every false Religion, made them conclude there was none true, or in earnest. And all this was because we were *without our King*; for 'twas the onely Interest of all those *usurpations* that were to contrive and preserve it thus.

And

And when we had *roll'd* thus through every form of Government, *address'd* to each, mov'd every stone, and rais'd each stone to the top of the Mount, but every one still tumbled down again, and ours like *Sisyphus's* labour was like to have no end, onely restless and various Calamity; Necessity then counsell'd us, and we applied to God's directions in the Text, I know not whether in his method, but it is plain we did seek *David our King*. And my heart is towards the Governours of Israel, that offer'd themselves willingly among the people: *bleß ye the Lord: yea, Thou, ô Lord, bleß them.* May all the blessings which *this* was the birth-day of, all that my Text encloses, all the goodness of the Lord, be the sure portion of them and their Families; may they see the King in his beauty, and peace upon Israel, and may their Names be blest in their posterities for evermore. We sought him with the violent impatiences of necessitous and furious desires, and our eyes, that had even fail'd with looking for him, did even fail with looking on him, as impotent and as unsatisfied in our fru-

Judg. 5.9.

itions as expectations; and he was entertain'd with as many tears as pray'd for; as one whom not our *Interests* alone, but our *guilts* had endear'd to us, and our tears: he was as necessary to us as *repentance*, as without whom it was impossible for us to repent and return from those impieties to him, of *usurping his rights*, of *exiling*, of *murthering him by wants*, because we could not doe it by the *Axe* or *Sword*; without him 'twas impossible for us to give over the committing these; and the *tears* that did welcome him were one of our best *lavers* to wash off that blood that we had pull'd upon our selves. One endear'd also to us by God's most miraculous preservations of him for us: We cannot look upon his life but as the issue of prodigious bounty, snatch'd by immediate Providence out of the gaping jaws of tyrannous, usurping, murtherous malice, merely to *keep him for our needs*, and for *this day*: One whom God had train'd up and manag'd for us, just as he did prepare *David their King*, at *thirty years* of age to take possession of that *Crown* which
 God

God had given him by *Samuel* about *twelve* years before; and in those years to prepare him for *Canaan* by a *Wilderness*, to *harden* him with discipline, that so the luxuries and the effeminacies of a Court might not *emasculate* and *melt* him; by constant *Watches*, *cares* and *business*, to make him equal for, habituated to, careful of, and affected with the business of a Kingdome; and by *constraining* him to dwell in *Mesech*, with Aliens to his Religion, to teach him to be constant to his own, and to love *Sion*. And hath he not prepared our *David* so for us? and we hope hath prepared for him too the *first daies* of *David*, having no *Sheba* in the Field, nor *Achitophel* in the Councel, nor an *Abiathar* in the Temple, not in that Temple which himself hath rais'd, God having made him instrument of that which he would not let *David* doe, *building* his house, and *furnishing* it with all its *Offices*, and making it fit for God to meet us in, when we do seek him also, which was the other perquisite of our Condition.

There never was so much pretence of

Inter 7 & 9
Sauli qui re-
gnavit an.
20. Vid. Sim.
Chron.

Psal. 120. 5.

Pfal. 14.
Rom. 3.

seeking God as in those late daies of his absence from us ; and it should seem indeed we knew not where to find him, we took such several waies to seek him. But if God did look down from heaven then as he did Psal. 14. to see if any did understand and seek after God, should he not then have found it here as there? They are altogether gone out of the way ; their throat is an open sepulchre , with their tongues have they deceived, the poison of asps is under their lips, their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness, their feet are swift to shed blood : destruction and unhappiness is in their waies, and the way of peace have they not known ; there is no fear of God before their eyes : They eat up my people as it were bread ; and, which is worse in these than them, they even then call upon God, as if they craved a blessing from the Lord upon that meat that did devour his people ; and when they did seek God, they meant to find a prey. Yet where were any others that did seek him? or that do cleave to him now? The Schismatick does not seek God, who shuns the place where he appears, and meets, and dwells ; nor does he cleave

cleave to God who *tears* himself off from the Lord's body. Mark such as *cause divisions*, saith S. Paul, and avoid them: and if all Christians must avoid them, then I am sure God is not with them. The other Schismatics that divide from the World by cutting off the World from them; do they seek God that are diverted by so many Saints and Angels? that terminate divinest Worship in a creature? or do they cleave to God, when their devotion embraceth stocks and stones? or did they seek God for the purpose of my Text, who did not seek David their King, but did apply themselves to several forein Princes, and to others which they hoped would set up their Golden calf? Incendiaries, that make fires and raise commotions, these are farre from God; for the Lord was not in the fire, or in the Earth-quake, but in the still small voice, in the soft whispers of peace and love. The Atheist, he that saies in his heart there is no God, will not seek God, you may be sure: nor does he care to seek David his King, who is equally well under all Governments that will allow his licences, and who hath no Religion to tie

Rom. 16. 17.

1 Kings 19.

11, 12.

him to any. If he at all dislik'd the former, it was upon reasons of *burthen*, or of *pride*, or *Libertinisme*: so much Religion though counterfeit was a reproach to him, and the face of such strictness was uneasy to him. These are so farre from seeking God, that God saies *these did drive him out of Israel*, Ezek. 9. 9. And then when that hath so long been the *Wit*, that 'tis now the *Complexion* of the Age, and they who thought fit to shew their not being hypocrites by *license*, and (to give it an easie word) by *drollery in sacred things*, have now made nothing to be sacred to them; how shall the Lord dwell among such? they are enough to *exorcise* God out of a Nation. The *Hypocrite* also, for all his *Fasts* and *Prayers*, never did seek God, for he is but a *whited Sepulchre*, our Saviour saies. Now who would seek the *living God* among the *dead*? the Lord of life sure is not to be found in *graves*. *Golgotha* was a place to *crucifie* him in, not *worship* him: he takes not in the air of funeral Vaults for *incense*; 'twas a *Demoniack* that us'd to be among the *Tombs*. The *subtle*, *false* and *faithless* men

men that walk in mazes, never shall meet God; these are the *windings* and the *tracts* of the old *Serpent*, and they lead onely to his habitation. They that do *climb* as if they meant to find God on his own Throne, that follow Christ up to a *pinnacle* of the *Temple*, or to the *top* of that exceeding high *Mount*, whence they can overlook the glories of the *World*, and pick and chuse, these do not goe to seek Christ there: It is the *Devil* that does carry up thither, upon his own designs. Nor is it possible to seek the *Lord* in the waies that lead to the *strange Womans house*, for *her house is the way to hell*, *Solomon* saies, (and he did know;) nay more, *her steps take hold on hell*, seise on those everlasting burnings which her foul heats *kindle* and *begin*. In a word, they that *seek their own*, that turn all merely to their advantage, they cannot seek God too, he will not be *joynt God* with *Mammon*. And then where are the men that sought him? that did retriue him to us? or with whom does he dwell? If he be not among us, we do in vain flatter our selves in our prosperity and peace, gawd it in all
our

Mat. 4.

Prov. 7. 27.

Prov. 5. 5.

Phil. 2. 21.

our bright appearances. Have we not seen the Sun rise with the glory of a day about him, and mounting in his strength chase away all the little receptacles and recesses of the night, not leave a cloud to shelter the least reliicks of her darkness, or any spot to checquer or to fleck the countenance of day? when strait a small handful of vapour rais'd by that Sun it self did creep upon his face, and by little and little getting strength bedasht his shine, and pour'd out as full streams of storm as he had done of light; till it even put out the day, and shed a night upon the Earth in spight of him. So may prosperity it self, if the Lord and his blessing be not in it, raise that which will soon overcast and benight the most glorious condition of a Nation. That wine which now makes your hearts glad, may prove like that which did commit the *Centaures* and the *Lapithæ*, first kindle *Lusts*, then *Warres*, and at last onely fill a *Cup of trembling and astonishment*; and that oyle that does make you *cheerful countenances*, may make your *paths slippery*, and nourish
flames

flames that will devour and ruine all.

But God, *who is found of them that seek him not, nay who himself sought the lost sheep and carried him, when with his straying he was wearied into impossibility of a return, has also sought, and found, and brought together us and our great Shepherd: for this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes; these waies of his also are so past finding out, that we may well conclude they are the mere footsteps of his incomprehensible goodness, and we have onely now to fear that goodness.*

Isay 65.1.

Luk. 15. 4, 5.

But give me leave to say, those that despise his goodness do not fear it; and they whom it does not lead to repentance, do despise it, S. Paul saies, Rom. 2. 4. *Despiseest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-sufferance, not knowing that the goodness of the Lord leads thee to repentance?*

And now, ô Lord, what sort of men among us hath thy goodness brought upon, and made repent? Those whom it was directed to convince, and came on purpose to, to prove by their own onely argument they had of providential Miracles, they

G

were

were not in the right, but that *destruction* and *misery* were in their waies; yet these chuse rather to deny their own conclusions, and resist God's goodness, then to be convinc'd and repent: for we have seen them as bold Martyrs to their Sin as ever any to Religion, signalize their resolv'd impenitence with chearful suffering, as if the fire they were condemn'd to were that *triumphal Chariot* in which the Prophet mounted up to heaven. Others that did not go so farre in condemnation nor guilt as they, and therefore think they have no reason to repent of that, do they repent of what they did contribute to it? Of those that lifted up their hands to swear and fight, how many are there that have made them fall, and smite their own thigh, saying, *What have I done?* Do not all rather justify as farre as they themselves proceeded? and if all that were well, why do not we repent of our Allegiance and Loyalty? if all that were well, what hath thy goodness done, ô Lord, that hath revert it all? And for the rest, those that do not partake the plenties of thy goodness, murmur and repine at it, are

2 King. 2. 11.

Jer. 31. 19.

are discontent at having what they pray'd for, what they would have dy'd for: those that have been partakers of it, have turn'd it into wantonness, have made it furnish them for base unworthy practices. Such as have not the generosity of vice, have not a noble, manly wickedness, are poltron sins; have made it raise a cry on the faith-fullest party, the best Cause, and the purest Church in the World. While we have debauch'd God's own best Attribute, made his Goodness procure for our most wicked or self-ends: and the face of things is so vicious in every order and degree and sexe, that— But the Confession is onely fit for Litanies, and we have need to make the burthen of ours be, Lord, give us some afflictions again, send out thy Indignation, for we do fear thy goodness, it hath almost undone us: and truly, where it does not better, 'tis the most fearful of God's Attributes or plagues, for it does harden there. S. Paul

saies so in the fore-cited place; and Origen does prove this very thing did harden Pharaoh's heart, indulgence was his induration. Now induration is the being put in Hell

Rom. 2. 5.

upon the Earth: there is the same impenitence in both, and Judgement is pronounc'd already on the hardned, and the life they lead is but the interval betwixt the Sentence and the Execution, and all their Sun-shine of Prosperity is but kindled brimstone, onely without the stench. And then to make the treasures of God's bounty be treasures of wrath to us, to make his kindness, his long-suffering, that is, S. Peter sayes, *salvation*, condemne us, his very goodness be hell to us! But sure so great a goodness as this we have tasted cannot have such deadly issues; and it was great indeed, so perfectly miraculous in such strange and continued successes, resisting our contrivances and our sins too, overcoming all opposition of our wices and our own policies, that do not comport with it, and in despite of all still doing us good; it was *fatality of goodness*. Now sure that which is so victorious will not be worsted by us. But oh! have we not reason so much more to fear the goodness? The greater and more undeserv'd it is, the more suspicious it is: as if it were the last blaze of the candle of the Lord when

when its *light gasps*, its *flash of shine* before it do *goe out*, the *dying struggles* and *extreme efforts* of goodness, to see if at the last any thing can be wrought by it. And if we did consider how some men manage the present goodness, make use of this time of it, and rake, and catch, we would believe they did fear the departure of it: but yet 'tis in our power to fixe it here. If we repent, *God's gifts* then are without repentance, but one of us must change: bring Piety and Vertue into countenance and fashion, and God will dwell among us. Nay S. Paul saies, *Goodness to thee if thou continue in his goodness*. If we our selves do not forsake it and renounce it, not fear it so as to fly from it, but with the fears of sinking men, that catch, and grasp, lay fast dead hold upon it; if, as God promises, he so put his fear in our hearts, that we never depart from it, fear that hath love in it, and is as unitive as that, then it shall ne're depart from us; but we shall see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living, and shall be taken thence to the eternal fulness of it. This day shall be the birth-day of immortal life,

Rom. 11. 22.

Jer. 32. 40.

the entring on a *Kingdome* that cannot be moved. A Crown thus beautify'd is a *Crown of glory* here, and shall adde weight and splendour to the Crown hereafter: A Church thus furnish'd is a *Church triumphant* in this World, and such a Government is the *Kingdome of heaven upon Earth*; and then we shall all reign with him who is the *King of Kings*, and who wash'd us in his blood to make us *Kings and Priests* to God and his Father, to whom be glory and dominion for ever. Amen.

Apoc. I. 5, 6.

F I N I S.

Errata.

Pag.9. line 8. after build place the semicolon; after departure in the line following blot it out.

Pag.16. line 18. for farre *Uniformity* read for *Uniformity*.

Pag.23. line 9. for *David the King*, read *David their King*.
